

Volume 8: Appendices (Introductory)

Appendix 3.1
National Marine Planning
Framework Compliance
Report

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1. Introduction

This report presents an assessment of compliance of the North Irish Sea Array Offshore Wind Farm (hereafter referred to as the ‘proposed development’) with the objectives of the National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF) published in June 2021. This report provides information on the measures implemented by North Irish Sea Array Windfarm Limited (Ltd) (hereafter referred to as the ‘Developer’) to ensure compliance with the objectives of the NMPF.

The NMPF brings together all marine-based human activities for the first time, and sets out the Government’s vision, objectives and marine planning policies for each marine activity.

The NMPF does not replace or remove existing regulatory regimes or legislative requirements governing the operation of various marine sectoral activities. Rather, it provides an overarching framework for their continued operation.

An Bord Pleanála, as part of its decision-making processes authorising marine development, is obliged to consider the consistency of the proposed development with the objectives of the NMPF.

The proposed development is an offshore wind farm comprising 35 or 49 wind turbine generators (WTGs) installed using monopile or jacket foundations, 18km of offshore export cables, between 91km to 111km of inter array cables and one offshore substation platform (OSP). The onshore elements include connection of the offshore export cables to a proposed grid facility close to the landfall at Bremore and a 33-35km onshore cable route to connect the grid facility to an existing transmission substation at Belcamp, North Co. Dublin.

In Table 1, the consistency of the proposed development with the objectives of the NMPF is assessed.

Table 1 Consistency of the proposed development with the policies and objectives of the NMPF.

Policy Name	Policy Description	Relevant to Proposed Development?	Consistency of the proposed development with objectives of the NMPF
OVERARCHING MARINE PLANNING POLICIES (OMPPs)			
Environmental - Ocean Health			
Environmental – Ocean Health			
Environmental - Ocean Health Policy 1	<p>Compliance with NMPF policies relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity • Non-Indigenous Species • Water Quality • Sea-floor and Water Column Integrity • Marine Litter • Underwater Noise <p>should include demonstration of contribution to the relevant Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) targets identified.</p>	Yes	<p>The proposed development is an offshore wind farm which comprises construction, operation and decommissioning phases. Compliance with NMPF policies has been embedded into the design of the proposed development wherever possible. Where this has not been possible, additional mitigation and monitoring measures are proposed to ensure compliance.</p> <p>In relation to the MSFD, the first cycle of implementation established 24 environmental targets covering all descriptors. The 2021 update to the Irish Marine Strategy has led to 25 revised environmental targets to align with the Birds and Habitats Directives, the Water Framework Directive, the Common Fisheries Policy and in turn with the criteria in the Commission Decision 2017/848. This resulted in 10 biodiversity targets, two commercial fisheries targets, three eutrophication targets, four targets for contaminants, two targets for marine litter and one target for non-indigenous species, hydrographical conditions, underwater noise, and contaminants in seafood. These are addressed throughout the EIAR as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ten Biodiversity targets (including food webs and sea-floor integrity) are addressed in the following chapters: Volume 3, Chapter 10: Marine Geology, Oceanography and Physical Processes (hereafter referred to as the ‘Physical Processes Chapter’), Volume 3, Chapter 11: Marine Water and Sediment Quality (hereafter referred to as the ‘Marine Water and Sediment Quality Chapter’), Volume 3, Chapter 12: Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology (hereafter referred to as the ‘Benthic Ecology Chapter’), Volume 3, Chapter 13: Fish and Shellfish Ecology (hereafter referred to as the ‘Fish and Shellfish Chapter’), Volume 3, Chapter 14: Marine Mammal Ecology (hereafter referred to as the ‘Marine Mammals Chapter’), Volume 4, Chapter 15: Offshore and Intertidal Ornithology (hereafter referred to as the ‘Offshore Ornithology Chapter’), Volume 5, Chapter 23: Biodiversity (hereafter referred to as the ‘Biodiversity Chapter’), and Volume 5, Chapter 35: Offshore Bats (hereafter referred to as the ‘Offshore Bats Chapter’). No significant, long-term negative effects have been identified in relation to the biodiversity targets for all impacts assessed. However, under the precautionary principle, a likely significant effect cannot be ruled out for foraging bats from the potential bat population at Rockabill as further monitoring is required to determine if a roost exists on the island. For further information on the assessment undertaken refer to Chapter 35. • Two commercial fisheries targets are addressed in the following chapters: the Fish and Shellfish Chapter and Volume 3, Chapter 16: Commercial Fisheries (hereafter referred

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			<p>to as the ‘Commercial Fisheries Chapter’). No significant negative effects have been identified in relation to the commercial fisheries targets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three eutrophication targets are addressed in the following chapters of the EIAR: the Physical Processes Chapter, the Marine Water and Sediment Quality Chapter, and Volume 4: Chapter 22: Water (hereafter referred to as the ‘Water Chapter’). No significant negative effects have been identified in relation to the eutrophication targets. • Four targets for contaminants are addressed in the following locations of the EIAR: the Physical Processes Chapter, the Marine Water and Sediment Quality Chapter, the Water Chapter, the Offshore Environmental Management Plan (Appendix 6.1 of Volume 8), and the Onshore Construction Environmental Management Plan (Appendix 9.1 of Volume 8). No significant negative effects have been identified in relation to the contaminants targets. • Two targets for marine litter are addressed in the following locations of the EIAR: Volume 5, Chapter 31: Resource and Waste Management (hereafter referred to as the ‘Resource and Waste Chapter’) and the Offshore Environmental Management Plan (Appendix 6.1 of Volume 8). No significant negative effects have been identified in relation to the marine litter targets. • The non-indigenous species target is assessed in the following locations of the EIAR: the Benthic Ecology Chapter, the Biodiversity Chapter, and the Offshore Environmental Management Plan (Appendix 6.1 of Volume 8). No significant negative effects were identified in relation to the non-indigenous species target. • The hydrographical target is addressed in the following locations of the EIAR: the Physical Processes Chapter, the Marine Water and Sediment Quality Chapter, the Water Chapter. No significant negative effects have been identified in relation to the hydrographical targets. • The underwater noise target is addressed in the following locations of the EIAR: the Fish and Shellfish Chapter, the Marine Mammals Chapter and the Underwater Noise Modelling Report (Appendix 14.1 of Volume 8). • The target contaminants in seafood is addressed in the Fish and Shellfish Chapter. No significant negative effects have been identified in relation to the contaminants in seafood targets. <p>The assessments conducted concluded that the proposed development will not have a negative effect on achieving good environmental status for the 25 current MSFD targets which demonstrates compliance of the proposed development with Environmental – Ocean Health Policy 1.</p>

Policy Name	Policy Description	Relevant to Proposed Development?	Consistency of the proposed development with objectives of the NMPF
Biodiversity			
Biodiversity Policy 1	<p>Proposals incorporating features that enhance or facilitate species adaptation or migration, or natural native habitat connectivity will be supported, subject to the outcome of statutory environmental assessment processes and subsequent decision by the competent authority, and where they contribute to the policies and objectives of this NMPF. Proposals that may have significant adverse impacts on species adaptation or migration, or on natural native habitat connectivity must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference and in accordance with legal requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoid • minimise or • mitigate significant adverse impacts on species adaptation or migration, or on natural native habitat connectivity 	Yes	<p>The proposed development has the potential to have significant adverse impacts on species adaption or migration or natural habitat connectivity. However, the design has been developed to avoid impacts where practicable and the assessments carried out in the preparation of the EIAR have included measures to minimise and mitigate against any potential adverse effects on biodiversity. As such no significant permanent negative impacts on species adaptation or migration, or on natural native habitat connectivity, are expected. However, under the precautionary principle, a likely significant effect cannot be ruled out for foraging bats from the potential bat population at Rockabill as further monitoring is required to determine if a roost exists on the island. For further information on the assessment undertaken in relation to offshore bats refer to Chapter 35.</p> <p>The residual effects of the proposed development in relation to species and species habitats are described in the following chapters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Benthic Ecology Chapter: Sections 12.5 to 12.7 demonstrate that the effects on seabed habitats and communities arising from disturbances during the lifecycle of the proposed development are all assessed to be not significant. • The Fish and Shellfish Chapter: Sections 13.5 to 13.7 inclusive, demonstrate that the significance of effects on fish, shellfish and megafauna species (turtles and basking sharks) associated with temporary increase in suspended sediment concentrations (SSC) and sediment deposition; habitat damage and disturbance; mortality, injury, behavioural impacts and auditory masking arising from noise and vibration are all assessed to be not significant. • The Marine Mammals Chapter: Sections 14.5 to 14.7 inclusive, demonstrate that the significance of effects associated with UXO clearance, pile driving, other construction activities, disturbance and collisions with vessels on prey availability and distribution and increased concentration of suspended solids are all assessed to be not significant for all species, post mitigation. The mitigation to be used includes a Vessel Management Plan (VMP), and a piling-specific Marine Mammal Management Protocol (MMMP). • The Offshore Ornithology Chapter: Sections 15.5 to 15.7 inclusive, demonstrate that the proposed development with proposed mitigation will not have significant effects on bird species adaptation or migration, and there will be no significant disturbance or displacement to birds. • In the Biodiversity Chapter, the significance of effects associated with disturbance or important habitat reduction is assessed in Sections 23.5 to Section 23.7. The assessment concluded that there would be short-term, reversible and negative residual effects at a local geographical scale to FW2 Lowland depositing river habitat during the construction phase.

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			<p>Short-term, reversible, and negative impacts are also assessed on WL1 hedgerows and WL2 treelines and on breeding birds which will be reversed as habitats are reinstated and compensatory planting is established at Blakes Cross North and the landfall site. Temporary, reversible impacts to aquatic and fish species were assessed which will be reversed once watercourses are reinstated at dry working areas. However, positive, long-term effects are expected during the operational phase of the proposed development due to the biodiversity enhancement planting incorporated within the design of the proposed development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Offshore Bats Chapter; Sections 35.5 to 35.7, inclusive, demonstrate that the proposed development with proposed mitigation will not have significant adverse effects on bat species adaptation or migration, and there will be no significant disturbance or displacement to bat species and populations with one exception. Under the precautionary principle a likely significant effect cannot be ruled out for foraging bats from the potential bat population at Rockabill as further monitoring is required to determine if a roost exists on the island. For further information on the assessment undertaken in relation to offshore bats refer to Chapter 35. <p>The proposed development has been subjected to a robust design and assessment process intended to avoid and minimise impacts to biodiversity, including on species adaptation or migration, or on natural native habitat connectivity. Where there is the potential of a likely significant adverse effect, mitigation measures are proposed to ensure the effect is lowered to not a significant level.</p> <p>Consequently, the proposed development complies with the requirements of Biodiversity Policy 1.</p>
Biodiversity Policy 2	<p>Proposals that protect, maintain, restore and enhance the distribution and net extent of important habitats and distribution of important species will be supported, subject to the outcome of statutory environmental assessment processes and subsequent decision by the competent authority, and where they contribute to the policies and objectives of this NMPF.</p> <p>Proposals must avoid significant reduction in the distribution and net extent of important habitats and other habitats that important species depend on, including avoidance of activity that may result in disturbance or displacement of habitats.</p>	Yes	<p>The assessments carried out in the preparation of the EIAR have included measures to avoid, minimise and mitigate against any potential adverse effects on the distribution and net extent of important habitats and other habitats that important species depend on. No significant adverse impacts on such habitats are expected.</p> <p>Evidence of this is included within the following chapters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the Benthic and Intertidal Ecology Chapter; Sections 12.5 to 12.7 inclusive, the significance of effects associated with habitat damage and disturbance is assessed to be not significant. In the Fish and Shellfish Chapter; Sections 12.5 to 12.7 inclusive, the significance of effects associated with a temporary increase in SSC and sediment deposition, habitat damage and disturbance, are all assessed to be not significant. <p>In the Marine Mammals Chapter, the significance of effects associated with UXO clearance, pile driving, and temporary increase in suspended sediment concentration (SSC) are all assessed to be minor or negligible for all species, post mitigation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the Biodiversity Chapter, the significance of effects associated with habitat disturbance or important habitat reduction is assessed in Sections 23.5 to Section 23.7.

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			<p>The assessment concluded that there would be short-term, reversible and negative residual effects at a local geographical scale to FW2 Lowland depositing river, WL1 hedgerows and WL2 treelines habitats during the construction phase. Temporary, reversible and negative impacts to aquatic and fish species were assessed which will be reversed once watercourses are reinstated at dry working areas.</p> <p>However, positive, long-term effects are assessed during the operational phase of the proposed development due to the biodiversity enhancement planting incorporated within the design of the proposed development.</p> <p>The proposed development has been subject to a robust design and assessment process intended to avoid and minimise impacts on habitats. Where there is the potential of a likely significant adverse effect, mitigation measures are proposed to ensure the effect is lowered to not a significant level.</p> <p>Consequently, the proposed development complies with the requirements of Biodiversity Policy 2.</p>
Biodiversity Policy 3	<p>Where marine or coastal natural capital assets are recognised by Government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposals must seek to enhance marine or coastal natural capital assets where possible. Proposals must demonstrate that they will in order of preference, and in accordance with legal requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> avoid minimise or mitigate significant adverse impacts on marine or coastal natural capital assets, or if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts on marine or coastal natural capital assets proposals must set out the reasons for proceeding 	Yes	<p>The design has been developed to avoid, where possible, impacts on marine or coastal natural capital assets, such as flora and fauna, air, water, geology and soils. The assessments carried out in the preparation of the EIAR have included measures to minimise and mitigate against any potential adverse effects on natural capital assets. No significant, permanent negative impacts on natural capital assets are expected.</p> <p>The residual effects of the proposed development in relation to natural capital assets is included within the following chapters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the Benthic and Intertidal Ecology Chapter: Sections 12.5 to 12.7 demonstrate that the significance of effects assessment of the potential impacts to seabed habitats arising from disturbances during the lifecycle of the proposed development are all assessed to be not significant. In Volume 4, Chapter 21: Land and Soils, Sections 21.5 to 21.7 demonstrate that the significance of effects assessment of the potential impacts to soils and geology arising from disturbances during the lifecycle of the proposed development are not significant. In the Water Chapter, Sections 22.5 to 22.7 demonstrate that the significance of effects assessment of the potential impacts to water quality arising from disturbances during the lifecycle of the proposed development are not significant. In the Biodiversity Chapter, the significance of effects associated with disturbance to natural capital assets is assessed in Sections 23.5 to Section 23.7. The assessment concluded that there would be short-term, reversible negative residual effects at a local geographical scale to FW2 Lowland depositing river habitat. However, positive, long-term effects are assessed during the operational phase of the proposed development due to the biodiversity enhancement planting incorporated within the design of the proposed development.

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The assessment presented in Volume 5, Chapter 27: Air Quality (hereafter referred to as the 'Air Quality Chapter') concludes that there will be a positive, moderate and permanent residual effect on air quality in Ireland as a result of the proposed development. <p>The proposed development has been subject to a robust design and assessment process which has sort to avoid and minimise impacts to marine and coastal natural capital assets. Where there is the potential of a likely significant adverse effect, mitigation measures are proposed to ensure the effect is lowered to not a significant level.</p> <p>Consequently, the proposed development complies with the requirements of Biodiversity Policy 3.</p>
Biodiversity Policy 4	<p>Proposals must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference and in accordance with legal requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> avoid minimise or mitigate significant disturbance to, or displacement of, highly mobile species 	Yes	<p>The assessments carried out in the preparation of the EIAR have included measures to avoid, minimise and mitigate against any potential adverse effects on highly mobile species.</p> <p>Evidence of this is included within the following chapters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the Fish and Shellfish Chapter; Sections 12.5 to 12.7 inclusive, the significance of effects associated with the temporary increase in SSC and sediment deposition, habitat damage and disturbance, mortality, injury, behavioural impacts and auditory masking arising from noise and vibration during construction, on fish and shellfish, are all assessed to be not significant. In the Marine Mammals Chapter, the significance of effects associated with UXO clearance, pile driving, other construction activities, disturbance and collisions with vessels, prey availability and distribution and increased concentration of suspended solids are all assessed to be minor or negligible for all species, post mitigation. The mitigation to be used includes a VMP, EVMP and a MMMP. In the Offshore Ornithology chapter, the significance of effects associated with disturbance and displacement from increased vessel activity, indirect effects on prey species, habitat loss, the accidental release of pollutants during construction, operation and decommissioning are all assessed to be not significant. During operation there is also collision risk of seabirds and migratory birds with offshore infrastructure in the array area and impacts arising from artificial light which are both assessed to be not significant. In the Biodiversity Chapter, the significance of effects associated with mobile species is assessed in Sections 23.5 to Section 23.7. The assessment concluded that there would be short-term, significant and reversible effects on breeding birds which will be reversed as habitats are reinstated and compensatory planting is established at Blakes Cross North and the landfall site. Temporary, significant and reversible impacts to aquatic and fish species were assessed which will be reversed once watercourses are reinstated at dry working areas.

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			<p>However, positive, long-term effects are assessed during the operational phase of the proposed development due to the biodiversity enhancement planting incorporated within the design of the proposed development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the Offshore Bats chapter, the significance of effects associated with disturbance and displacement from noise, vessel activity and infrastructure, artificial lighting at night, changes to prey during construction, operation and decommissioning are all assessed to be not significant. During operation there is also potential impacts to migrating and foraging bat species from collision and barotrauma which is also assessed to be not significant with one exception, under the precautionary principle a likely significant effect cannot be ruled out for foraging bats from the potential bat population at Rockabill as further monitoring is required to determine if a roost exists on the island. For further information on the assessment undertaken in relation to offshore bats refer to Chapter 35. <p>The embedded mitigation measures discussed in each chapter ensure compliance with Biodiversity Policy 4.</p>
Protected Marine Sites			
Protected Marine Sites Policy 1	Proposals must demonstrate that they can be implemented without adverse effects on the integrity of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) or Special Protection Areas (SPAs). Where adverse effects from proposals remain following mitigation, in line with Habitats Directive Article 6(3), consent for the proposals cannot be granted unless the prerequisites set by Article 6(4) are met.	Yes	<p>The Developer has prepared a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) which is included within the planning application, which assessed whether the proposed development (either alone or in combination with other projects or plans) is likely to have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European site.</p> <p>No potential impacts were identified on the conservation objectives of any of the SACs and SPAs screened in to the assessment that may result in an adverse effect on the integrity of the European site following mitigation.</p> <p>This ensures compliance with Protected Marine Sites Policy 1.</p> <p>Please refer to the NIS document prepared for the proposed development for a full detailed analysis of each SAC and SPA.</p>
Protected Marine Sites Policy 2	<p>Proposals supporting the objectives of protected marine sites should be supported and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> be informed by appropriate guidance must demonstrate that they are in accordance with legal requirements, including statutory advice provided by authorities relevant to protected marine sites 	Yes	<p>The Developer has prepared a NIS to assess whether the proposed development (either alone or in combination with other projects or plans) is likely to have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European site. The guidance used in the preparation of the NIS was as follows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management-OPR Practice Note PN01 (Office of the Planning Regulator, 2021); Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities. Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG, 2009, revised 11/02/10); Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM 2018, updated 2022);

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan II: Strategic Environmental Assessment Report. Department of Environment, Climate and Communications & Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland (DECC, 2023); • Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan II: Principles Report. Department of Environment, Climate and Communications & Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland (DECC, 2022); • Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government Circular NPW 1/10 and PSSP 2/10 on Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive - Guidance for Planning Authorities (DEHLG, 2010); Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities. Circular NPWS 1/10 and PSSP 2/10 (DEHLG, 2010); • Guidance on EIS and NIS preparation for Offshore Renewable Energy Projects. Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE, 2017); • Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. European Commission (EC 2021); • Guidelines for Good Practice Appropriate Assessment of Plans under Article 6(3) Habitats Directive (International Workshop on Assessment of Plans under the Habitats Directive, 2011); • Guidance Document on Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. European Commission (EC, 2007); • European Commission Managing Natura 2000 sites The provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, EC 2018; • Marine Natura Impact Statements in Irish Special Areas of Conservation: A working document. Prepared by National Parks and Wildlife Service. Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht (DAHG 2012); • Guidance to Manage the Risk to Marine Mammals from Manmade Sound Sources in Irish Waters. Prepared by National Parks and Wildlife Service. Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht (DAHG 2014); • Wind energy developments and Natura 2000. European Commission (EC, 2011); • The Guiding Principles for Cumulative Impact Assessments in Offshore Wind Farms, (Renewable UK, 2013) as presented in the Guidance on EIS and NIS Preparation for Offshore Renewable Energy Projects. Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE, 2017); and • Interpretation line suggested by the Commission as regards the application of Directive 85/337/EEC to associated/ancillary works. <p>The guidance used to inform the NIS ensures compliance with Protected Marine Sites Policy 2.</p>

Policy Name	Policy Description	Relevant to Proposed Development?	Consistency of the proposed development with objectives of the NMPF
Protected Marine Sites Policy 3	<p>Proposals that enhance a protected marine site's ability to adapt to climate change, enhancing the resilience of the protected site, should be supported and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be informed by appropriate guidance • must demonstrate that they are in accordance with legal requirements, including statutory advice provided by authorities relevant to protected marine sites 	Yes	<p>The purpose of the proposed development is not to enhance the ability of any marine protected site to adapt to climate change.</p> <p>However, the proposed development is an offshore wind energy project which will significantly contribute to the Government's target of achieving 5GW of electricity generated by offshore wind by 2030. The renewable electricity generated will facilitate the long-term shift away from fossil fuel use and associated fossil fuel emissions. There will be a net beneficial impact on climate change which will have the indirect effect of enhancing the resilience of marine protected sites.</p> <p>This ensures compliance with Protected Marine Sites Policy 3.</p>
Protected Marine Sites Policy 4	<p>Until the ecological coherence of the network of protected marine sites is examined and understood, proposals should identify, by review of best available evidence (including consultation with the competent authority with responsibility for designating such areas as required), the features, under consideration at the time the application is made, that may be required to develop and further establish the network.</p> <p>Based upon identified features that may be required to develop and further establish the network, proposals should demonstrate that they will, in order of preference, and in accordance with legal requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoid • minimise or • mitigate significant impacts on features that may be required to develop and further establish the network or • if it is not possible to mitigate significant impacts, proposals should set out the reasons for proceeding 	Yes	<p>In the preparation of the EIAR and NIS, the features and qualifying interests of the protected marine sites, within the zone of influence of the proposed development, were identified. The likely significant effects on the features and qualifying interests of protected marine sites were assessed, in particular in the EIAR in the Physical Processes Chapter, the Benthic Ecology Chapter, the Fish and Shellfish Chapter, the Marine Mammals Chapter, the Offshore Ornithology Chapter and the Biodiversity Chapter. Mitigation measures were proposed, as required.</p> <p>The Developer prepared a NIS to assess whether the proposed development (either alone or in combination with other projects or plans) is likely to have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European site. No potential impacts were identified on the conservation objectives of any of the SACs and SPAs in the proposed development's zone of influence that may result in an adverse effect on the integrity of the European site following mitigation.</p> <p>This ensures compliance with Protected Marine Sites Policy 4.</p>
Non-Indigenous Species			
Non-Indigenous Species Policy 1	<p>Reducing the risk of the introduction and / or spread of non-indigenous species is a requirement of all proposals. Proposals must demonstrate a risk management approach to prevent the introduction of and / or spread of non-indigenous species, particularly when:</p>	Yes	<p>No marine invasive non-native species (MINNS) were identified during the site specific surveys. However, records of a number of non-native species exist from the benthic study area such as slipper limpet, <i>Crepidula fornicate</i>, wireweed <i>Sargassum multicum</i>, carpet sea squirt <i>Didenmum vexillum</i>, Japanese skeleton shrimp <i>Caprella mutica</i>, leathery sea squirt <i>Styela clava</i> and the Pacific oyster <i>Magallana gigas</i>.</p> <p>A wide range of vessels will be engaged, particularly in the construction and decommissioning phases, of the proposed development. The vessels may come from</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> moving equipment, boats or livestock (for example fish or shellfish) from one water body to another introducing structures suitable for settlement of non-indigenous species, or the spread of non-indigenous species known to exist in the area of the proposal 		<p>overseas and some will make numerous round trips to port, which will contribute to the risk of the introduction or spread of MINNS through ballast water discharge. The risk is addressed in the Benthic Ecology Chapter and the Offshore Environmental Management Plan (Appendix 6.1 of Volume 8).</p> <p>Non-native species management measures implemented during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases are in compliance with the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments (2004) and the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), thus ensuring that the risk of the potential introduction and spread of MINNS will be minimised.</p> <p>These measures are included in the offshore Environmental Management Plan (Appendix 6.1) and ensure compliance of the proposed development with Non-Indigenous Species Policy 1.</p>
Water Quality			
Water Quality Policy 1	<p>Proposals that may have significant adverse impacts upon water quality, including upon habitats and species beneficial to water quality, must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference and in accordance with legal requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> avoid minimise or mitigate significant adverse impacts 	Yes	<p>The proposed development will require seabed installations of export cables, inter-array cables, 35 to 49 WTGs and one OSP. The construction phase has the potential to introduce contaminants and increase suspended sediment in the water column, causing deterioration of the water quality of bathing waters, shellfish water protected areas (WPAs), waterbodies designated under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and non-designated waterbodies.</p> <p>Potential impacts to water quality have been assessed in the Marine Water and Sediment Quality Chapter and the Water Chapter, with no significant adverse residual effects expected on relevant waterbodies (designated and non-designated) during construction, operation and decommissioning. Further information is also provided in the Offshore Water Framework Directive Compliance Report (Appendix 11.1 of Volume 9) and the Onshore Water Framework Directive Compliance Report (Appendix 22.2 of Volume 10).</p> <p>Habitats and species that are sensitive to a change in water quality are considered in the Benthic and Intertidal Ecology Chapter, Fish and Shellfish Chapter, Offshore Ornithology Chapter and Marine Mammals Chapter. Potential impacts have been identified (Sections 12.4 and 13.4, respectively) and assessment of the effect of these impacts is presented (Sections 12.7 and 13.7, respectively).</p> <p>Mitigation measures are presented in each chapter (Sections 12.6 and 13.6, respectively). These include an offshore environmental management plan (EMP) that specifies measures that will reduce the risk of harm to habitats and species including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marine pollution contingency measures to address the risks, methods and procedures to deal with any spills and collision incidents in relation to all activities carried out seaward of the high water mark (HWM)

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A chemical risk review to include information regarding how and when chemicals are to be used, stored and transported in accordance with recognised best practice guidance • Non-native species measures to manage the risk of introduction and spread of invasive non-native species; and • Waste management arrangements <p>Due to the assessed level of impact to water quality being not significant for all activities assessed and the commitment to implement the Offshore EMP to manage potential impacts to water quality, the proposed development is compliant with Water Quality Policy 1.</p>
Water Quality Policy 2	Proposals delivering improvements to water quality, or enhancing habitats and species, which can be of benefit to water quality, should be supported.	No	Water Quality Policy 2 is not relevant to the proposed development as the project is not designed to improve water quality, nor enhance habitats and species.
Sea Floor and Water Column Integrity			
Sea Floor and Water Column Integrity Policy 1	<p>Proposals that incorporate measures to support the resilience of marine habitats will be supported, subject to the outcome of statutory environmental assessment processes and subsequent decision by the competent authority and where they contribute to the policies and objectives of this NMPF. Proposals which may have significant adverse impacts on marine, particularly deep sea, habitats must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference and in accordance with legal requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoid • minimise or • mitigate significant adverse impacts on marine habitats or • if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts on marine habitats must set out the reasons for proceeding 	Yes	<p>The proposed development will require seabed installation of export cables, inter-array cables, 35 to 49 WTGs and one OSP. The construction phase has the potential to introduce pollutants, chemicals and suspended sediment into the water column, causing deterioration of the water quality and consequent adverse impacts on marine habitats. The placement of temporary and permanent infrastructure on the seabed also has the potential to cause temporary and long-term habitat loss.</p> <p>The potential impacts from the construction, operation and decommissioning activities on marine habitats have been assessed in the Benthic and Intertidal Ecology Chapter and the Fish and Shellfish Chapter.</p> <p>The direct impacts to subtidal benthic habitats as a result of long-term habitat loss during construction, operation and decommissioning are assessed to be not significant. There will be no loss of intertidal habitat (due to the use of HDD under the intertidal zone to the exit pit in the subtidal zone) and minimal loss and disturbance of nearshore habitats at the exit pit location itself.</p> <p>The offshore EMP (Appendix 6.1) includes measures that will reduce the risk of harm to benthic and intertidal species and habitats including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marine pollution contingency measures in compliance with MARPOL to address the risks, methods and procedures to deal with any spills and collision incidents of the authorised project in relation to all activities carried out below the HWM • A chemical risk review to include information regarding how and when chemicals are to be used, stored and transported in accordance with recognised best practice guidance

Policy Name	Policy Description	Relevant to Proposed Development?	Consistency of the proposed development with objectives of the NMPF
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-native species measures to manage the risk of introduction and spread of invasive non-native species and Waste management arrangements <p>Due to the assessed level of impact being not significant and the commitment to implement the offshore EMP, the proposed development is compliant with Sea Floor and Water Column Integrity policy 1.</p>
Sea Floor and Water Column Integrity Policy 2	<p>Proposals, including those that increase access to the maritime area, must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference and in accordance with legal requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> avoid minimise or mitigate adverse impacts on important habitats and species 	Yes	<p>The proposed development will require seabed installation of export cables, inter-array cables, up to 49 WTGs and one OSP. The construction phase has the potential to introduce pollutants, chemicals and suspended sediment into the water column, causing deterioration of water quality and consequent adverse impacts on important habitats and species. The placement of temporary and permanent infrastructure on the seabed also has the potential to cause temporary and long-term habitat loss.</p> <p>The potential impacts from the construction, operation and decommissioning activities on marine habitats have been assessed in the Benthic and Intertidal Ecology Chapter and the Fish and Shellfish Chapter.</p> <p>The likelihood of direct impacts to habitats is assessed to be not significant and there will be minimal loss and disturbance of inshore habitats. No ecologically significant adverse residual effects on benthic subtidal ecology receptors have therefore been predicted as a result of long-term habitat loss.</p> <p>The offshore EMP (Appendix 6.1) includes measures that will reduce the risk of harm to benthic and intertidal species and habitats including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marine pollution contingency measures in compliance with MARPOL to address the risks, methods and procedures to deal with any spills and collision incidents of the authorised project in relation to all activities carried out below the HWM A chemical risk review to include information regarding how and when chemicals are to be used, stored and transported in accordance with recognised best practice guidance Non-native species management measures to manage and prevent the risk of introduction and spread of MINNS and Waste management arrangements <p>Due to the assessed level of impact being below 'significant adverse' and the commitment to implement the offshore EMP, the proposed development is compliant with Sea Floor and Water Column Integrity policy 2.</p>

Policy Name	Policy Description	Relevant to Proposed Development?	Consistency of the proposed development with objectives of the NMPF
Sea Floor and Water Column Integrity Policy 3	<p>Proposals that protect, maintain, restore and enhance coastal habitats for ecosystem functioning and provision of ecosystem services will be supported, subject to the outcome of statutory environmental assessment processes and subsequent decision by the competent authority, and where they contribute to the policies and objectives of this NMPF.</p> <p>Proposals must take account of the space required for coastal habitats, for ecosystem functioning and provision of ecosystem services, and demonstrate that they will, in order of preference and in accordance with legal requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> avoid minimise or mitigate for net loss of coastal habitat 	Yes	<p>The installation of the export cables at the landfall has the potential to have an adverse impact through disturbance on coastal habitats, ecosystem functioning and ecosystem services at the coastline. At the landfall the export cables will be installed by horizontal directional drilling (HDD).</p> <p>The HDD entrance pit is situated landward of the HWM and the HDD exit pit is seaward of the low water mark, thereby effectively avoiding the entire intertidal zone. Therefore, the landfall activities will minimise the potential for impact on the coastal habitats and ecosystems.</p> <p>The impacts on subtidal and inter-tidal coastal habitats are assessed the Intertidal and Benthic Ecology Chapter and the residual effects are described in 12.5 to 12.7 and are assessed as not significant. The impacts on the coastal habitats above the HWM are assessed in the Biodiversity Chapter and the residual effects are described in Section 23.7. The conclusion of the assessments is that there will be no likely significant effects on the coastal habitats above the HWM.</p> <p>The offshore EMP (Appendix 6.1) and the onshore Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) include measures that will reduce the risk of harm to coastal species and habitats including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A marine pollution contingency plan to address the risks, methods and procedures to deal with any spills and collision incidents of the authorised project in relation to all activities carried out below the HWM A chemical risk review to include information regarding how and when chemicals are to be used, stored and transported in accordance with recognised best practice guidance A non-native species management plan detailing how the risk of introduction and spread of invasive non-native species will be minimised and Waste management arrangements <p>Due to the assessed level of impact being below 'significant adverse' and the commitment to implement the offshore EMP and onshore CEMP, the proposed development is compliant with Sea Floor and Water Column Integrity Policy 3.</p>
Marine Litter			
Marine Litter Policy 1	<p>Proposals that facilitate waste re-use or recycling, or that reduce marine and coastal litter will be supported, where they contribute to the policies and objectives of this NMPF. Proposals that could potentially increase the amount of litter that is discharged into the maritime area, either intentionally or accidentally, must include measures (such as development of a waste management plan) to,</p>	Yes	<p>The proposed development will require numerous vessels in the construction, operation and decommissioning phases, which raises the risk of potentially introducing litter into the maritime area. To mitigate this risk the Developer is committed to implementing the marine pollution contingency measures which are laid out in full in the offshore EMP (Appendix 6.1) to comply with MARPOL requirements.</p> <p>The Developer will manage waste as per the accepted waste hierarchy broadly defined as prevention, preparing for re-use, recycling, recovery, and disposal, in decreasing order of preference.</p>

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	<p>in order of preference and in accordance with legal requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoid • minimise or • mitigate the litter <p>Demonstration of these measures must provide satisfactory evidence that the proposal is able to manage all waste without creation of litter.</p>		The offshore EMP provides a detailed explanation of the measures which ensures compliance with Marine Litter Policy 1.
Underwater Noise			
Underwater Noise Policy 1	<p>Proposals must take account of spatial distribution, temporal extent, and levels of impulsive and / or continuous sound (underwater noise) that may be generated and the potential for significant adverse impacts on marine fauna.</p> <p>Where the potential for significant impact on marine fauna from underwater noise is identified, a Noise Assessment Statement must be prepared by the proposer of development. The findings of the Noise Assessment Statement should demonstrably inform determination(s) related to the activity proposed and the carrying out of the activity itself.</p> <p>The content of the Noise Assessment Statement should be relevant to the particular circumstances and must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration of compliance with applicable legal requirements, such as necessary assessment of proposals likely to have underwater noise implications, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Appropriate Assessment (AA) b. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) c. Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) d. Specific response to ‘strict protection’ requirements of Article 12 of the Habitats Directive in relation to certain species listed in Annex IV of the Directive and e. Species protected under the Wildlife Acts 	Yes	<p>The proposed development will be constructed using a variety of underwater techniques and therefore is expected to create some level of underwater noise. Underwater noise modelling was undertaken as part of the preparation of the EIAR to assess the likely significant effects on marine fauna.</p> <p>The assessment presented in the Marine Mammals Chapter (supported by the Underwater Noise Assessment Technical Note (Appendix 14.1 of Volume 9)) considered the loudest noise and the greatest potential impact range, which was from pile driving monopile foundations surrounded by the deepest waters. Other noise sources were also considered, including cable laying, dredging, drilling, rock placement, trenching and the operation of the turbines. These noise sources were found to be significantly below that of impact piling. The noise of unexploded ordnance clearance was also considered.</p> <p>The assessment presented in the Marine Mammals Chapter determined that there will be no significant effects on marine fauna from underwater noise (Section 14.7). Consequently, a Noise Assessment Statement is not required.</p> <p>Underwater noise impacts have also been considered in the NIS where marine fauna species are identified as Qualifying Interests of protected marine sites.</p> <p>Proposed mitigation measures include the use of marine mammal observers and acoustic deterrent devices, and these are described in the MMMP (in Appendix 14.3 of Volume 9). Implementation of these measures ensures compliance with Underwater Noise Policy 1.</p>

Policy Name	Policy Description	Relevant to Proposed Development?	Consistency of the proposed development with objectives of the NMPF
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An assessment of the potential impact of the development or use on the affected species in terms of environmental sustainability Demonstration that significant adverse impacts on marine fauna resulting from underwater noise will, in order of preference and in accordance with legal requirements be: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> avoided minimised or mitigated or if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts on marine fauna, the reasons for proceeding must be set out <p>This policy should be included as part of statutory environmental assessments where such assessments require consideration of underwater noise.</p>		
Air Quality			
Air Quality Policy 1	Proposals that support a reduction in air pollution should be supported, subject to the outcome of statutory environmental assessment processes and subsequent decision by the competent authority, and where they contribute to the policies and objectives of this NMPF. Proposals must demonstrate consideration of their contribution to air pollution, both direct and cumulative.	Yes	<p>The proposed development is an offshore wind energy project. As a significant source of renewable electricity, the proposed development will result in a reduction in the air pollution from fossil fuel electricity generation, both directly and cumulatively.</p> <p>The assessment presented in the Air Quality Chapter concludes that there will be a positive, moderate and permanent residual effect on air quality in Ireland as a result of the proposed development.</p> <p>Therefore, the proposed development complies with Air Quality Policy 1.</p>
Air Quality Policy 2	Where proposals are likely to result in or facilitate an increase in air pollution, proposals should demonstrate that they will, in order of preference in accordance with legal requirements and standards: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> avoid minimise or mitigate air pollution 	Yes	<p>As a significant source of renewable electricity, the proposed development will result in a reduction in air pollution from fossil fuel electricity generation. Whilst there will be a slight negative residual effect of increased air pollution associated with the construction phase of the proposed development, this is not considered significant in EIA terms.</p> <p>The assessment presented in the Air Quality Chapter concludes that there will be a positive, moderate and permanent residual effect on air quality in Ireland as a result of the proposed development.</p> <p>Therefore, the proposed development complies with Air Quality Policy 2 by providing a reduction in overall air pollution.</p>

Policy Name	Policy Description	Relevant to Proposed Development?	Consistency of the proposed development with objectives of the NMPF
Climate Change			
Climate Change Policy 1	<p>Proposals should demonstrate how they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoid contribution to adverse changes to physical features of the coast • enhance, restore or recreate habitats that provide a flood defence or carbon sequestration ecosystem services where possible <p>Where potential significant adverse impacts upon habitats that provide a flood defence or carbon sequestration ecosystem services are identified, these must be in order of preference and in accordance with legal requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoided • minimised • mitigated • if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, the reasons for proceeding must be set out <p>This policy should be included as part of statutory environmental assessments where such assessments are required.</p>	Yes	<p>The proposed development will be subject of a statutory environmental impact assessment.</p> <p>The potential impact of the construction and presence of the offshore infrastructure on the coastline has been assessed within the Marine Physical Processes Chapter of the EIAR. The assessment concluded that there will be no significant adverse effects (Section 10.7). In the preparation of the EIAR, no flood defence or carbon sequestration ecosystem service receptors were identified within assessment study areas.</p> <p>The coastal area in proximity to the proposed development boundary seaward of the HWM (hereafter referred to as the ‘offshore development area’) is relatively benign and sheltered in terms of wave and tidal effects which is conducive to the settlement of mainly fine sediments that dominate the local seabed.</p> <p>The presence of the WTG and OSP during the operational phase will cause slight reductions in wave heights which will dissipate to leeward (down-wind) of the array area. Modelling of wave processes toward the adjacent coastline showed that during large storm events there would be a slight reduction in the heights of waves which could reach the coastline. However, subsequent wave shoaling into shallow water will remain the dominant process on waves in the nearshore, so this modification to wave conditions is considered imperceptible, relative to baseline conditions, which is not significant.</p> <p>In addition, tidal blockage, which will occur in the form of local scale flow interactions around individual WTG and OSP foundations, will not extend any distance or occur at a scale that would interfere with any marine process receptors, therefore there would be no impact to the coastal area.</p> <p>Modelling of physical processes resulting from the proposed development demonstrated that there will be no adverse changes to physical features of the coast, ensuring compliance with Climate Change Policy 1.</p>
Climate Change Policy 2	<p>For the lifetime of the proposal, the following climate change matters must be demonstrated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • estimation of likely generation of greenhouse gas emissions, both direct and indirect • measures to support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions where possible • likely impact of climate change effects upon the proposal from factors including but not limited to: sea level rise, ocean acidification, changing weather patterns • measures incorporated to enable adaptation climate change effects 	Yes	<p>The proposed development will be a significant source of renewable electricity over its 35-year life.</p> <p>The generation of greenhouse gas emissions due to the construction of the proposed development and the savings in greenhouse gas emissions during its operations are presented and assessed in Volume 5, Chapter 28: Climate. The assessment demonstrated that significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions will arise due to the consumption of renewable electricity over the lifetime of the proposed development.</p> <p>Consequently, the proposed development complies with Climate Change Policy 2.</p>

Policy Name	Policy Description	Relevant to Proposed Development?	Consistency of the proposed development with objectives of the NMPF
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> likely impact upon climate change adaptation measures adopted in the coastal area relevant to the proposal and/or adaptation measures adopted by adjacent activities where likely impact upon climate change adaptation measures in the coastal area relevant to the proposal and/or adaptation measures adopted by adjacent activities is identified, these impacts must be in order of preference and in accordance with legal requirements: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> avoided, minimised, mitigated, <p>if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, the reasons for proceeding must be set out.</p>		
Economic – Thriving Maritime Economy			
Co-existence			
Co-existence Policy 1	<p>Proposals should demonstrate that they have considered how to optimise the use of space, including through consideration of opportunities for co-existence and co-operation with other activities, enhancing other activities where appropriate.</p> <p>If proposals cannot avoid significant adverse impacts (including displacement) on other activities they must, in order of preference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> minimise significant adverse impacts mitigate significant adverse impacts or <p>if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals should set out the reasons for proceeding</p>	Yes	<p>The site of proposed development is in an area of relatively high marine usage and as such, poses a potential for high levels of potential adverse impacts. However, the developer is committed to implementing mitigation measures to significantly reduce these impacts.</p> <p>The developer will create and ensure the contractor implements cable specification and installation measures, a Cable Risk Assessment (CBRA), a Vessel Management Plan (VMP) and a Fisheries Management and Mitigation Strategy (FMMS). In addition, advisory safety zones will be established, the details of the development will be published in Notice to Mariners and included on updated nautical charts.</p> <p>Adoption of the management plans listed above will reduce potential impacts on other marine activities to no higher than moderate (not significant).</p> <p>Please refer to the Commercial Fisheries Chapter, Volume 4, Chapter 17: Shipping and Navigation (hereafter referred to as the ‘Shipping and Navigation Chapter’), Volume 4,</p>

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			Chapter 20: Infrastructure and Other Users (hereafter referred to as the 'Infrastructure and Other Users Chapter'), and Volume 5, Chapter 33: Socio-Economic, Tourism and Recreation (hereafter referred to as the 'Socio-Economic, Tourism and Recreation Chapter') for further information on the co-existence of the proposed development with the relevant users of the marine environment. The project design and the implementation of the management plans ensure compliance with the Co-existence Policy 1.
Infrastructure			
Infrastructure Policy 1	Appropriate land-based infrastructure which facilitates marine activity (and vice versa) should be supported. Proposals for appropriate infrastructure that facilitates the diversification or regeneration of marine industries should be supported.	Yes	The construction of the offshore elements of the proposed development will create approximately 740 and 1,360 full time equivalent direct and indirect jobs respectively. Regionally this results in 416 direct jobs and 765 indirect jobs after factoring in leakage and displacement. It is anticipated that the operational phase will employ approximately 1,530 and 2,570 full time equivalent (FTE) direct and indirect jobs respectively. Regionally this results in 1,033 direct jobs and 1,735 indirect jobs after factoring in leakage and displacement. See the Socio-Economic, Tourism and Recreation Chapter for further information. The proposed development will indirectly facilitate the diversification or regeneration of marine industries, in compliance with Infrastructure Policy 1.
Social-Engagement with the Sea			
Access			
Access Policy 1	Proposals, including in relation to tourism and recreation, should demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoid • minimise or • mitigate significant adverse impacts on public access 	Yes	The proposed development has the potential to impact on tourism and recreation during the construction and operational phases. The offshore and onshore development areas overlap with areas used for tourism and recreation. Recreation is assessed in the Infrastructure and Other Users Chapter and in the Socio-Economic, Tourism and Recreation Chapter. These assessments include mitigation measures where necessary and conclude that there will be no significant adverse impacts on public access, tourism or recreation as a result of the proposed development. Therefore, the proposed development complies with Access Policy 1.
Access Policy 2	Proposals demonstrating appropriate enhanced and inclusive public access to and within the maritime area, and that consider the future provision of services for tourism and recreation activities, should be supported, subject to the outcome of statutory environmental assessment processes and subsequent decision by the	Yes	Though not a tourist development, it is anticipated that there will be opportunities for marine tourism which will allow tourists to visit the offshore development area. Recreation is assessed in the Infrastructure and Other Users Chapter and the Socio-Economic, Tourism and Recreation Chapter. Therefore, the proposed development indirectly complies with Access Policy 2.

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	competent authority, and where they contribute to the policies and objectives of this NMPF.		
Employment			
Employment Policy 1	<p>Proposals should demonstrate contribution to a net increase in marine related employment in Ireland, particularly where the proposals are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in line with the skills available in Irish coastal communities adjacent to the maritime area improve the sustainable use of natural resources diversify skills to enable employment in emerging industries 	Yes	<p>The construction of the offshore elements of the proposed development will create direct employment opportunities for approximately 740 individuals and indirect opportunities for approximately 1360. Construction of the onshore infrastructure of the proposed development will create a further 250 full time equivalent jobs. Approximately 15 full time equivalent jobs, some of which will local and marine related, will be created to facilitate the operation of the proposed development.</p> <p>Further information on the need for the proposed development is presented in Volume 2, Chapter 4: The Need for the Proposed Development (hereafter referred to as the 'Need for the Proposed Development Chapter'). Socio-economic benefits of the proposed development are presented in the Socio-Economic, Tourism and Recreation Chapter.</p> <p>In addition, it is anticipated that there may be opportunities for marine tourism, thereby indirectly creating independent employment opportunities for local individuals from the Irish coastal communities.</p> <p>The proposed development will contribute to a net increase in marine employment. to comply with Employment Policy 1.</p>
Heritage Assets			
Heritage Assets Policy 1	<p>Proposals that demonstrate they will contribute to enhancing the significance of heritage assets will be supported, subject to the outcome of statutory environmental assessment processes and subsequent decision by the competent authority, and where they contribute to the policies and objectives of this NMPF. Proposals unable to contribute to enhancing the significance of heritage assets will only be supported if they demonstrate that they will, in order of preference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> avoid minimise or mitigate harm to the significance of heritage assets and if it is not possible, to mitigate harm, then the public benefits for proceeding with the proposal must outweigh the harm to the significance of the heritage assets. (see definition of 'Public Benefits' in the Glossary) 	Yes	<p>The installation of cables and foundations for WTGs, the OSP and the onshore grid facility has the potential to cause direct disturbance and/or damage to undiscovered artefacts of marine archaeological significance and terrestrial cultural heritage features.</p> <p>An assessment of these potential impacts has been undertaken in Volume 3, Chapter 18: Offshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage and Chapter 25: Onshore Archaeology, Architectural and Cultural Heritage from an offshore and onshore perspective, respectively. The assessments have determined that no significant effects on heritage assets are expected (Sections 18.7 and 25.7, respectively).</p> <p>The main mitigation for the protection of known marine archaeological receptors will be avoidance. This will be achieved via the implementation and monitoring of archaeological exclusion zones (AEZs), which are proposed for identified high value offshore archaeological and cultural heritage receptors. In such zone no works will be undertaken. All high value receptors with a potential for impact will have a minimum 100m AEZ.</p> <p>A Protocol for Archaeological Discoveries (PAD) will be implemented for the construction phase. The PAD is part of the Offshore EMP. The PAD is a system for reporting and investigating unexpected archaeological discoveries encountered during the different phases of the project, with a retained archaeologist providing guidance and advising the contractor on the implementation of the PAD. The PAD also makes</p>

Policy Name	Policy Description	Relevant to Proposed Development?	Consistency of the proposed development with objectives of the NMPF
			<p>provision for the implementation of temporary exclusion zones around areas of possible archaeological interest, for prompt archaeological advice, and, if necessary, for archaeological inspection of important features prior to further activities in the vicinity. The PAD provides a mechanism to comply with legislation, including notification to the National Monuments Service.</p> <p>The Cultural Heritage Strategy (Appendix 25.4) provides appropriate identification, recording and relevant protection measures of cultural heritage assets in the onshore development area.</p> <p>The assessment of the potential effects on marine and onshore cultural heritage determined that there will not be any significant effect on heritage assets.</p> <p>The proposed development complies with the Heritage Assets Policy 1.</p>
Rural Coastal and Island Communities			
Rural Coastal and Island Communities Policy 1	Proposals contributing to access, communications, energy self-sufficiency or sustainability of rural coastal and / or island communities should be supported. Proposals should ideally be inclusive of continual education, skills development and training in marine sectors, thus improving the sustainability, social benefits and economic resilience of rural and island communities.	Yes	<p>The proposed development will be situated off the coasts of Counties Dublin, Meath and Louth. Approximately 740 direct full time equivalent (FTE) and 1,360 indirect FTE jobs will be required for the construction phase. A further 1,530 direct and 2,570 indirect FTE jobs will be required for the operation and maintenance of the proposed development.</p> <p>The developer will establish a Community Benefit Fund once the proposed development is in construction. It is estimated that the funding will reach approximately €80 million, approximately €4 million per annum for 20 years. The fund is expected to allow the local coastal communities to develop new and existing initiatives in their own areas, support existing local amenities and clubs, develop environmental and energy efficiency schemes, as well as the fishing industry.</p> <p>Further information on the Operation and Maintenance Facility is provided in Volume 6, Chapter 38: Cumulative and Inter-Related Effects. Volume 5, Chapter 32: Population and Human Health and the Socio-Economic, Tourism and Recreation Chapter address the socio-economic effects of the proposed development, including the community benefit fund.</p> <p>The proposed development complies with the Rural Coastal and Island Communities Policy 1</p>
Seascape and Landscape			
Seascape and Landscape Policy 1	Proposals should demonstrate how the likely significant impacts of a development on the seascape and landscape of an area have been considered. Proposals will only be supported if they demonstrate that they, in order of preference: a) avoid	Yes	Multiple photomontages were prepared at various stages during the design process. These photomontages were published on the Developer's website (www.northirishsearray.ie) and displayed during public consultation events. Further information on the public consultation and feedback received is presented in the Consultation Report (Appendix 1.2) of this EIAR.

Policy Name	Policy Description	Relevant to Proposed Development?	Consistency of the proposed development with objectives of the NMPF
	<p>b) minimise or</p> <p>c) mitigate significant adverse impacts on the seascape and landscape of the area</p> <p>d) If it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals must set out the reasons for proceeding.</p> <p>This policy should be included as part of statutory environmental assessments.</p>		<p>Photomontages were prepared and visualisation assessments were carried out. These are presented in Volume 5, Chapter 29: Seascape, Landscape and Visual (hereafter referred to as the ‘Seascape, Landscape and Visual Chapter’) and the appendices to the chapter. In the assessment, 55 representative viewpoints were selected and used to measure the magnitude of the impacts. The assessment concluded that the greatest significance of effect on the seascape and landscape of the area, and on visual amenity, will be major to moderate negative, which is not significant in EIA terms. The cumulative effect assessment carried out for the Seascape, Landscape and Visual Chapter concluded that though the Negligible or Low-negligible contribution of the proposed development to the overall cumulative effect from the southerly viewpoints (VP36 to VP47), it is acknowledged that a significant cumulative effect is generated at these viewpoints.</p> <p>Whilst a significant adverse cumulative effect was assessed from the southerly viewpoints (VP 36 to 47), it is noted that the proposed development is a critical development to enable Ireland to meet the legally binding renewable energy target of 5GW of offshore wind energy by 2030. The key objectives of the proposed development also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To deliver a fixed bottom offshore wind farm to contribute towards the Irish Governments target delivery of 5GW of offshore wind generation by 2030 and 80% of electricity to come from renewable sources by 2030 • To support the European carbon reduction targets of reducing emissions by 95% by the year 2050 to support the European Union in becoming carbon neutral • To support the reduction in demand for imported energy from a volatile fossil fuel import market by improving Ireland’s domestic energy generation capabilities through the deployment of offshore wind • To deliver the proposed development in a safe, efficient and environmentally sustainable manner within the constraints of technical feasibility and economic viability • To deliver renewable electricity at low cost to the Irish consumer through the use of known, tried and tested technology (fixed foundation offshore wind) <p>Further information outlining the reasons for the proposed development to proceed despite the significant cumulative impact is presented in Volume 2, Chapter 4: Need for the Proposed Development.</p> <p>Therefore, the proposed development complies with Seascape and Landscape Policy 1.</p>
Social Benefits			

Policy Name	Policy Description	Relevant to Proposed Development?	Consistency of the proposed development with objectives of the NMPF
Social Benefits Policy 1	Proposals that enhance or promote social benefits should be supported. Proposals unable to enhance or promote social benefits should demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimise or • mitigate significant adverse impacts which result in the displacement of other existing or authorised (but yet to be implemented) activities that generate social benefits 	Yes	The developer will establish a Community Benefit Fund which will be put in place once the proposed development is in construction. It is estimated that the funding will reach approximately €80 million, approximately €4 million per annum for 20 years which will directly enhance social benefits in the region of the proposed development. Further information on the proposed development's compliance of Social Benefits Policy 1 are provided in the Socio-Economic, Tourism and Recreation Chapter. The proposed development and the Community Benefit Fund associated with it directly align with Social Benefits Policy 1.
Social Benefits Policy 2	Proposals that increase the understanding and enjoyment of the marine environment (including its natural, historic, and social value), or that promote conservation management and increased education and skills, should be supported.	No	Social Benefits Policy 2 is not relevant to the proposed development as the project is not explicitly designed to increase the understanding and enjoyment of the marine environment.
Transboundary			
Transboundary Policy 1	Proposals that have transboundary impacts beyond the maritime area, on either the terrestrial environment or neighbouring international jurisdictions, must show evidence of consultation with the relevant public authorities, including terrestrial planning authorities and other country authorities. Proposals should consider transboundary impacts throughout the lifetime of the proposed activity.	Yes	Notifications of the application for permission for the proposed development have been sent to the Northern Ireland Department for Infrastructure Planning, the United Kingdom Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the Planning Directorate (Wales), Strategic Environmental Assessment Gateway (Scotland) and Isle of Man Department of Infrastructure. The proposed development is an offshore wind farm situated off the east coast of Ireland in the Irish Sea. Transboundary effects arising throughout the lifetime of the proposed development have been assessed in Volumes 3-5 of the EIAR. The assessments concluded that there will be no significant transboundary effects. Therefore, the proposed development complies with Transboundary Policy 1.
KEY SECTORAL/ACTIVITY POLICIES			
Aquaculture			
Aquaculture Policy 1	Proposals for sustainable development of aquaculture that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate use of innovative approaches, and / or • contribute to diversification of species being grown in a given locality, particularly proposals applying a multi-trophic approach, and / or • enhances resilience to the effects of climate change should be supported 	No	The aquaculture policies are not relevant to the proposed development as the project is for an offshore wind farm and not a proposal for the sustainable development of aquaculture.

Policy Name	Policy Description	Relevant to Proposed Development?	Consistency of the proposed development with objectives of the NMPF
Aquaculture Policy 2	<p>Non-aquaculture proposals in aquaculture production areas must demonstrate consideration of, and compatibility with, aquaculture production. Where compatibility is not possible, proposals must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoid • minimise • mitigate significant adverse impacts on aquaculture • If it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts upon aquaculture, proposals should set out the reasons for proceeding 	No	The aquaculture policies are not relevant to the proposed development as the project is for an offshore wind farm with no aquaculture areas involved.
Aquaculture Policy 3	<p>Land-based coastal infrastructure that is critical to and supports development of aquaculture should be supported, in accordance with any legal requirements and provided environmental safeguards contained within authorisation processes are fully met.</p>	No	The aquaculture policies are not relevant to the proposed development as the project is for an offshore wind farm with no aquaculture areas involved.
Defence and Security			
Defence and Security - Policy 1	<p>Any proposal that has the potential to interfere with the performance by the Defence Forces of their security and non-security related tasks must be subject to consultation with the Defence Organisation.</p> <p>This includes potential interference with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety of navigation and access to naval facilities • Firing, test or exercise areas • Communication, and surveillance systems • Fishery protection functions <p>Proposals should only be supported where, having consulted with the Defence Organisation, they are satisfied that it will not result in unacceptable interference with the performance by the Defence Forces of their security and non-security related tasks.</p> <p>Any proposal will be subject to the relevant Environmental Assessments, as set out in the introduction to this NMPF.</p>	Yes	<p>The proposed development is in proximity to the Gormanston Danger Area EID1, through which the offshore export cable corridor (ECC) passes. The closest radar equipped military airfield is Casement Aerodrome. An assessment of impacts on these receptors is presented in Volume 3, Chapter 19: Aviation and Radar and the Infrastructure and Other Users Chapter.</p> <p>Both the Irish Air Corps (IAC) and the Department of Defence (DoD) have been informed by the proposed development under the assumption that the WTGs will be detected on the Casement Primary Surveillance Radar (PSR). Consultation with the DoD will continue to ensure that construction, operation and decommissioning activities will not impact on activities within the Gormanston Danger Area EID1, the airspace of which used by the IAC as a firing range.</p> <p>The effect of the proposed development on the defence forces' military receptors is determined to be not significant. As the Developer and EIAR team have engaged with the DoD, the proposed development is in compliance with Defence and Security Policy 1.</p>
Energy - Emerging Technologies (Carbon Capture and Storage, and Hydrogen)			

Policy Name	Policy Description	Relevant to Proposed Development?	Consistency of the proposed development with objectives of the NMPF
n/a	NMPF notes that specific marine planning policy development will be considered in the future	No	There are no known carbon capture and storage or hydrogen projects in the proposed development area.
Energy - Natural Gas Storage			
Natural Gas Storage Policy 1	Subject to assessments required for the protection of the environment, and only where in keeping with the outcome of the review of the security of energy supply of Ireland's electricity and natural gas systems (which is being carried out by Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications), natural gas storage proposals should be supported.	No	Natural Gas Storage Policy 1 is not relevant to the proposed development as the project is for an offshore wind farm with natural gas storage component.
Energy – Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE)			
ORE Policy 1	Proposals that assist the State in meeting the Government's offshore renewable energy targets, including the target of achieving 5GW of capacity in offshore wind by 2030 and proposals that maximise the long-term shift from use of fossil fuels to renewable electricity energy, in line with decarbonisation targets, should be supported. All proposals will be rigorously assessed to ensure compliance with environmental standards and seek to minimise impacts on the marine environment, marine ecology, and other maritime users.	Yes	<p>The proposed development is an offshore wind energy project which will directly contribute to the Government's target of achieving 5GW of offshore wind-generated renewable electricity by 2030. The contribution of a renewable electricity source on the east coast of Ireland will facilitate the long-term shift away from fossil fuel use and will increase Ireland's energy security.</p> <p>The Need for the Proposed Development Chapter provides further information on how the proposed development will assist in meeting the Governments offshore renewable energy targets.</p> <p>Volumes 3 and 5 of the EIAR present a rigorous assessment of the impacts of the proposed development and the mitigation measures in relation to minimising impacts on the marine environment, marine ecology, and other maritime users.</p> <p>In conclusion, the proposed development is compliant with the objectives of the ORE Policy 1.</p>
ORE Policy 2	Proposals must be consistent with national policy, including the Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan (OREDPP) and its successor. Relevant Projects designated pursuant to the Transition Protocol and those projects that can objectively enable delivery on the Government's 2030 targets will be prioritised for assessment under the new consenting regime.	Yes	<p>Volume 2, Chapter 3: Legal and Policy Framework and the Need for the Proposed Development Chapter describe how the proposed development is consistent with national policy including the OREDPP in assisting the Government in meeting offshore renewable energy targets. The OREDPP identified assessment areas for offshore wind development in the Strategic Environmental Assessment. The proposed development is strategically positioned within Assessment Area 1) East Coast – North.</p> <p>The proposed development is deemed a Phase One Project under the Transition Protocol and therefore directly complies with ORE Policy 2.</p>

Policy Name	Policy Description	Relevant to Proposed Development?	Consistency of the proposed development with objectives of the NMPF
	Into the future, areas designated for offshore energy development, under the Designated Marine Area Plan process set out in the Maritime Area Planning Bill, will underpin a plan-led approach to consenting (or development of our marine resources) (Note – see Appendix D on Spatial Designation Process).		
ORE Policy 3	<p>Any non-ORE proposals that are in or could affect sites held under a permission or that are subject to an ongoing permitting or consenting process for renewable energy generation (wind, wave or tidal should demonstrate that they will in order of preference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoid • minimise • mitigate adverse impacts or • if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals should set out the reasons for proceeding <p>Applicants for non-ORE proposals in or affecting ORE sites should engage ORE developers in consultation during the pre-application processes as appropriate.</p>	No	ORE Policy 3 is not relevant to the proposed development as the project is an ORE proposal.
ORE Policy 4	Decisions on ORE developments should be informed by consideration of space required for other activities of national importance described in the NMPF.	Yes	<p>The proposed development has been carefully assessed alongside all other proposed and potential construction activities in the local area and each has been considered with potential cumulative effects. The interaction of the proposed development and other activities of national importance is also assessed within the Commercial Fisheries Chapter, Shipping and Navigation Chapter, Aviation and Radar Chapter and the Infrastructure and Other Users Chapter.</p> <p>The assessment of the impacts of proposed development on proposed and consented activities is provided in Volume 6, Chapter 38: Cumulative and Inter-Related Effects.</p>
ORE Policy 5	Proposals for activity that may adversely impact ORE test projects by virtue of being within or adjacent to ORE test sites, or between site and landfall of ORE test projects that may adversely impact ORE test site projects, should demonstrate that they will in order of preference: a) avoid, b) minimise, c) mitigate adverse impacts.	No	ORE Policy 5 is not relevant to the proposed development as the project is an ORE proposal that will not affect other ORE projects.

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ORE Policy 6	Proposals for infrastructure enabling local use of excess energy generated from emerging marine technologies (wave, tidal, floating wind) should be supported.	No	ORE Policy 6 is not relevant to the proposed development as the project is not for local infrastructure related to use of excess energy.
ORE Policy 7	Where potential for ports to contribute to ORE is identified, plans and policies related to this port must encourage development in such a way as to facilitate ORE and related supply chain activity.	Yes	<p>The proposed development will require a construction port, where the components will be stored and, in some instances, assembled before being transferred to the offshore development area. A Construction Port Assessment was carried out during the preparation of the EIAR, which identified a number of suitable ports both on the island of Ireland and Great Britain.</p> <p>For the Operation and Maintenance Facility, the current option under consideration is the adaption and leasing of part of an existing port facility at Greenore in Ireland.</p> <p>Whilst the Operation and Maintenance Facility is subjected to a separate planning/permitting consents, it is included in the cumulative impact assessment of the EIAR in Volume 6, Chapter 38: Cumulative and Inter-Related Effects. Further information is provided in Volume 2, Chapter 6: Description of the Proposed Development – Offshore (hereafter referred to as the ‘Offshore Description Chapter’).</p> <p>The proposed development complies with ORE Policy 7.</p>
ORE Policy 8	Proposals for ORE must demonstrate consideration of existing cables passing through or adjacent to areas for development, making sure ability to repair and carry out cable-related remedial work is not significantly compromised. This consideration should be included as part of statutory environmental assessments where such assessments are required.	Yes	<p>Existing and potential future sub-sea cables were considered when defining the cable corridor and development boundary for the proposed development. A total of 6 cables and pipelines pass through the study area but none intersect the proposed development boundary.</p> <p>Please refer to Volume 2, Chapter 5: Consideration of Alternatives, Volume 2: Chapter 8: Construction Strategy – Offshore (hereafter referred to as the ‘Offshore Construction Chapter’), Chapter 9: Construction Strategy – Onshore (hereafter referred to as the ‘Onshore Construction Strategy’); the Infrastructure and Other Users Chapter, and Volume 4, Chapter 26: Material Assets (hereafter referred to as the ‘Material Assets Chapter’) for further information.</p> <p>Therefore, the proposed development adheres to the policy objectives inherent in ORE Policy 8.</p>
ORE Policy 9	A permission for ORE must be informed by inclusion of a visualisation assessment that supports conditions on any development in relation to design and layout. Where a development consent is applied for in an area already subject to permission, proposals must include a visualisation assessment to inform design and layout.	Yes	<p>Visualisation assessments were carried out and are presented in the Seascape, Landscape and Visual Chapter in accordance with the following guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, Guidelines of Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment: Third Edition (2013)

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	<p>Visualisation assessments should demonstrate consultation with communities that may be able to view the proposal, in addition to any other ORE development, which had received consent to proceed at a given site at the time the consent application is made, with the aim of minimising impact. Visualisation assessments will be informed by specific emerging guidelines (detailed in the actions set out in Annexes to this NMPF).</p> <p>Prior to specific guidelines being available, policy and best practice relating to visualisation assessment should be used. This consideration must be included as part of statutory environmental assessments where such assessment is required.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) (now known as NatureScot), Offshore Renewables – Guidance on assessing the impact on coastal landscape and seascape, Guidance for Scoping an Environmental Statement (SNH, 2012) • SNH (NatureScot), Visual Representation of Wind Farms Guidance (SNH, 2017a) • SNH (NatureScot), Siting and Designing Wind Farms in the Landscape (SNH, 2017b) • SNH (NatureScot), NatureScot (2021) Guidance - Assessing the cumulative landscape and visual impact of onshore wind energy developments (also identified as applicable to the cumulative effects of offshore wind energy developments) and • Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG), Wind Energy Development Guidelines (2006 / 2019) Draft Revised <p>As part of the pre-application process, multiple photomontages were prepared at various stages during the design process. These photomontages were published on the Developer's website (www.northernseaarray.ie) and displayed during public consultation events. Further information on the public consultation and feedback received is presented in the Consultation Report (Appendix 1.2) of this EIAR.</p> <p>Therefore, the proposed development adheres to the policy objectives inherent in ORE Policy 9.</p>
ORE Policy 10	Opportunities for land-based, coastal infrastructure that is critical to and supports development of ORE should be prioritised in plans and policies, where possible.	No	The proposed project is not a land use plan or policy. ORE Policy 10 is not relevant.
ORE Policy 11	Where appropriate, proposals that enable the provision of emerging renewable energy technologies and associated supply chains will be supported.	Yes	The flexibility provided by the DF Opinion will enable the proposed development to avail of emerging renewable energy technologies and associated supply chains.
Energy – Petroleum			
Petroleum Policy 1	<p>Proposals in areas where petroleum activities or petroleum production infrastructure have already been approved, or where applications consistent with the Government's prohibition on new exploration activity are under consideration, should only be authorised where compatibility with the existing, authorised or proposed activity can be satisfactorily demonstrated or the proposal is clearly of strategic or national importance.</p> <p>Compatibility should be achieved, in order of preference, through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoiding, or • minimising, or 	No	The Petroleum Policies are not relevant to the proposed development as the project is not on or near any site where petroleum activities or infrastructure exist.

Policy Name	Policy Description	Relevant to Proposed Development?	Consistency of the proposed development with objectives of the NMPF
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mitigating adverse impacts. If it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals should set out the reasons for proceeding. 		
Petroleum Policy 2	<p>Proposals potentially affecting future potential activity in areas (blocks) subject to existing petroleum authorisations should avoid sterilisation of that area for future petroleum-related activity consistent with Government policy, and demonstrate how they, in order of preference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> avoid, or minimise, or mitigate potential adverse impacts on those activities. If it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals should set out the reasons for proceeding. 	No	The Petroleum Policies are not relevant to the proposed development as the project is not on or near any site where petroleum activities or infrastructure exist.
Energy – Transmission			
Transmission Policy 1	<p>Subject to the appropriate environmental assessments, electricity transmission proposals that maintain or improve the security and diversity of Ireland’s energy supply should be supported, including interconnectors, relevant EU Projects of Common Interest (PCIs), and projects in receipt of relevant alternative EU priority energy infrastructure classification provided for by the EU TEN-E regulations.</p> <p>This should include development of the offshore transmission system and connection with the onshore transmission system necessary to meet the Government’s target of 5 GW of offshore renewables by 2030, as well as development of associated transmission system / interconnector infrastructure for hybrid offshore projects, connecting offshore renewable energy installations with Ireland and one or more other electricity transmission systems.</p>	No	Transmission Policy 1 is not relevant to the proposed development as the proposed development is an ORE project and not a transmission project.
Transmission Policy 2	Proposals for activities that are in or could affect energy transmission proposals in sites held under a permission or that are subject to an ongoing permitting	No	Transmission Policy 2 is not relevant to the proposed development as the proposed development will not be in or could affect energy transmission proposals in sites held under a permission or that are subject to an ongoing permitting or consenting process for

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	<p>or consenting process for energy transmission proposals should demonstrate that they will, in order of preference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoid • minimise • mitigate adverse impacts, or • if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals should set out the reasons for proceeding 		energy transmission proposals. See the Infrastructure and Other Users Chapter for more details on offshore infrastructure in the vicinity of the proposed development.
Transmission Policy 3	Decisions on transmission developments should be informed by consideration of space required for other activities of national importance described in the NMPF.	No	Transmission Policy 3 is not relevant to the proposed development as the proposed development is an ORE project and not a transmission development.
Transmission Policy 4	<p>Where possible, opportunities for land-based, coastal infrastructure that is critical to and supports energy transmission should be prioritised in plans and policies.</p> <p>Designation of land-based zones for the purposes of co-ordination and integration with relevant Marine Plans must be considered, where appropriate.</p>	No	Transmission Policy 4 is not relevant to the proposed development as it is an ORE development which does not include any facilitation of energy transmission projects.
Transmission Policy 5	<p>Proposals for construction or operation activities within one nautical mile of either of the two existing natural gas interconnector pipelines shall be avoided.</p> <p>If construction or operation activities are proposed to take place within one nautical mile of either of the two existing natural gas interconnector pipelines, the views of Gas Networks Ireland in relation to how such activities could impact the pipelines shall be taken into account and either appropriate mitigation measures put in place or the proposed activities altered.</p> <p>If construction or operation activities involve the crossing of either of the two existing natural gas interconnector pipelines by other pipelines or cables, the views of Gas Networks Ireland in relation to how</p>	Yes	<p>The array area of the proposed development is situated approximately 0.5km from Interconnector 2 Scotland to Ireland (IC2) with the nearest WTG located approximately 750m from IC2. The interaction with the construction phase of the proposed development and IC2 is assessed in the Infrastructure and Other Users Chapter. Due to the distance from IC2 to the array area, the assessment concluded that there are no significant effects arising from the construction of the proposed development.</p> <p>The onshore cable will cross IC2 twice and Interconnector 1 (IC1) once. The views of Gas Networks Ireland in relation to how such activities could impact the pipelines will be taken into account. The pipeline crossing works will be undertaken in accordance with the Gas Networks Ireland GNI Safety Advice for Working in the Vicinity of Gas Pipelines (2016). A Gas Networks Ireland (GNI) inspector will be present for the duration of the pipeline crossing works to ensure adherence to the Gas Networks Ireland procedures.</p> <p>Gas Networks Ireland has been consulted in relation to the proximity of the proposed development and IC2 and IC1 and the proposed crossing of the onshore assets. Therefore, the proposed development aligns with Transmission Policy 5.</p>

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	such activities could impact the pipelines shall be taken into account and either appropriate mitigation measures be put in place or the proposed activities altered.		
Transmission Policy 6	Subject to required assessments for the protection of the environment, and only where in keeping with the outcome of the review of the security of energy supply of Ireland's electricity and natural gas systems (which is being carried out by Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications), and not involving the importation of fracked gas, additional proposals for natural gas transmission/ import infrastructure should be supported.	No	Transmission Policy 6 is not relevant to the proposed development as the proposed development is an ORE project and not a transmission project.
Fisheries			
Fisheries Policy 1	<p>Proposals that may have significant adverse impacts on access for existing fishing activities, must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoid, • minimise, or • mitigate such impacts. • If it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts on fishing activity, the public benefits for proceeding with the proposal that outweigh the significant adverse impacts on existing fishing activity must be demonstrated. 	Yes	<p>The impacts of the proposed development on the access for existing commercial fisheries activities was assessed. Please refer to the Commercial Fisheries Chapter for a full impact assessment on the predicted impacts on the commercial fishing industry.</p> <p>The fisheries activities included in the assessment are Irish and UK demersal otter trawlers, Irish potting vessels, Irish razor clam, mussel and scallop dredgers, UK scallop dredgers, Irish and Belgian beam trawlers, and Irish pelagic trawlers and demersal seine fisheries.</p> <p>Upon implementation of the Fisheries Management and Mitigation Strategy (FMMS) (developed in consultation with the fishing industry), all residual effects are expected to be not significant (Section 16.7).</p> <p>This ensures compliance with Fisheries Policy 1.</p>
Fisheries Policy 2	<p>Where significant impact upon fishing activity arising from any proposal is identified, a Fisheries Management and Mitigation Strategy (FMMS) should be prepared by the proposer of development or other maritime area use, in consultation with local fishing interests and other interests as appropriate. All efforts should be made to agree the FMMS with those interests.</p> <p>Those interests should also undertake to engage with the proposer and provide best available, transparent and accurate information and data in a timely manner to help complete the FMMS. The FMMS should be drawn up as part of readying</p>	Yes	<p>A FMMS will be prepared in consultation with the local fishing interests. (refer to Volume 9, Appendix 16.2)</p> <p>Upon implementation of the FMMS all residual significant effects on fishing activities are not expected to be significant (Section 16.7). This ensures compliance of the proposed development with Fisheries Policy 3.</p>

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	<p>a proposal prior to submission, with measures identified to be considered in finalising conditions of any authorisations granted. Development of the strategy should be coordinated with other relevant assessments such as EIA where possible.</p> <p>The content of the Fisheries Management and Mitigation Strategy (FMMS) should be relevant to the particular circumstances and could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An assessment of the potential impact of all stages of the development or other suggested use on the affected fishery or fisheries, both in socio-economic terms and in relation to environmental sustainability. This assessment should include consideration of any impact upon cultural identity within fishing communities, as well as identifying indirect / in-combination matters. • A recognition that the disruption to existing fishing opportunities / activity should be minimised as far as possible. • Demonstration of the public benefit(s) that outweigh the significant impacts identified. • Reasonable measures to mitigate any constraints which the proposed development or use may place on existing or proposed fishing activity. • Reasonable measures to mitigate any potential impacts on sustainability of fish stocks (e.g. impacts on spawning grounds or areas of fish or shellfish abundance) and any socio-economic impacts. • Where it does not prove possible to agree the FMMS with all interests: • Divergent views and the reasons for any divergence of views between the parties should be fully explained in the FMMS, and dissenting views should be given a platform within the said FMMS to make their case. • Where divergent views are identified, relevant public authorities should be engaged to identify informal and formal steps designed to enable proposal(s) to progress. 		

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Fisheries Policy 3	Proposals that enhance the sustainability of fisheries or support a sustainable fishing industry, including the industry's diversification and or enhanced resilience to the effects of climate change, should be supported provided they fully meet the environmental safeguards contained within authorisation processes.	No	Fisheries Policy 3 is not relevant to the proposed development as the project is not designed to enhance fishery sustainability.
Fisheries Policy 4	Infrastructural proposals that enable access to fishing activities should be supported provided they fully meet the environmental safeguards contained within authorisation processes.	No	Fisheries Policy 4 is not relevant to the proposed development as the project is not designed to enhance access to fishing activities.
Fisheries Policy 5	Proposals, regardless of the type of activity they relate to, enhancing essential fish habitat, including spawning, nursery and feeding grounds, and migratory routes should be supported. If proposals cannot enhance essential fish habitat, they must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoid, • minimise, • mitigate significant adverse impact on essential fish habitat, including spawning, nursery and feeding grounds, and migration routes. • If it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impact on essential fish habitat, proposals must set out the reasons for proceeding. 	Yes	The proposed development will not enhance essential fish habitat, including spawning, nursery and feeding grounds, and migratory routes should be supported. The impact of the proposed development on essential fish habitat, including spawning, nursery and feeding grounds, and migratory routes has been assessed in the Benthic and Intertidal Ecology and Fish and Shellfish Ecology chapters. The assessments determined that residual effects of the proposed development on benthic and intertidal habitats and species and fish and shellfish species would not be significant. This ensures compliance with Fisheries Policy 5.
Fisheries Policy 6	Ports and harbours should seek to engage with fishing and other relevant stakeholders at an early stage to discuss any changes in infrastructure that may affect them. Any port or harbour developments should take account of the needs of the dependent fishing fleets with a view to avoiding commercial harm where possible. Where a port or harbour has reached a minimum level of infrastructure required to support a viable fishing fleet, there should be a presumption in favour of maintaining this infrastructure, provided there is an ongoing requirement for it to remain in place and that it continues to be fit for purpose.	No	Fisheries Policy 6 is not relevant to the proposed development as the project is not a port or harbour development.

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Mineral Exploration and Mining			
Mineral Exploration and Mining Policy 1	Only proposals which are in line with national policy on mineral exploration and mining should be considered, provided they fully meet the environmental safeguards contained within the mineral exploration and mining consent processes.	No	The Mineral Exploration and Mining policy is not relevant to the proposed development as the project contains no mining or mineral exploration aspects.
Ports, Harbours and Shipping			
Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 1	<p>To provide for shipping activity and freedom of navigation the following factors will be taken into account when reaching decisions regarding development and use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which the locational decision interferes with existing or planned routes used by shipping, access to ports and harbours and navigational safety. This includes commercial anchorages and approaches to ports as well as key littoral and offshore routes; • A mandatory Navigation Risk Assessment; • Where interference is likely: whether reasonable alternatives can be identified and • Where there are no reasonable alternatives: whether mitigation through measures adopted in accordance with the principles and procedures established by the International Maritime Organisation can be achieved at no significant cost to the shipping or ports sector 	Yes	<p>Impacts of the proposed development on navigation, ports and anchorages are assessed in Section 17.5 of the Shipping and Navigation Chapter. The assessment included a Navigational Risk Assessment (NRA) (Appendix 17.1 of Volume 9).</p> <p>Mitigation and monitoring measures relevant to shipping and navigation during the construction phase will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advisory safety zones; • advisory safe passing distances; • buoyed construction area; • compliance with relevant regulator guidance; • guard vessel(s) as required; • liaison with Irish Coast Guard in relation to search and rescue (SAR) resources; • lighting and marking; • marine coordination for project vessels; • marking on nautical charts; • project vessel compliance with international marine regulations; and • promulgation of information. <p>The Shipping and Navigation Chapter assessed potential impacts on vessel displacement, collision risk, reduced access during construction, operation and decommissioning and additionally allision risk, reduction in under keel clearance, anchor interaction and emergency response capabilities during operation. The resulting residual effect was either tolerable with mitigation or broadly acceptable, which are not significant in EIA terms. Therefore, the proposed development complies with Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 1.</p>
Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 2	<p>Proposals that may have a significant impact upon current activity and future opportunity for expansion of port and harbour activities should demonstrate that they will, in order of preference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoid 	Yes	<p>Impacts associated with safety of port operations and access are assessed in Section 17.5 of the Shipping and Navigation Chapter.</p> <p>The significance of the effect from the impact of the proposed development during construction, operation and decommissioning on current port activity (i.e. access to local</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimise or • mitigate significant adverse impacts and • if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts on current activity and future opportunity for expansion of port and harbour activities, proposals should set out the reasons for proceeding 		<p>ports) is determined to be broadly acceptable and As Low As Reasonably Practicable (ALARP), which is not significant in EIA terms.</p> <p>Therefore, the proposed development complies with Ports, Harbour and Shipping Policy 2.</p>
Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 3	Proposals that may have a significant impact upon current activity and future opportunity for expansion of port and harbour activities must demonstrate consideration of the National Ports Policy, the National Planning Framework, and relevant provisions related to the TEN-T network.	Yes	<p>An Operation and Maintenance Facility will be required for the proposed development. The current option under consideration is the adaption and leasing of part of an existing port facility at Greenore in Ireland. Whilst the Operation and Maintenance Facility is subjected to a separate planning/permitting consents, it is included in the cumulative impact assessment of the EIAR in Volume 6, Chapter 38: Cumulative and Inter-Related Effects. Further information is provided in the Offshore Description Chapter.</p> <p>The modification and use of Greenore port would be in compliance with Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 3.</p>
Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 4	<p>Proposals within ports limits, beside or in the vicinity of ports, and / or that impact upon the main routes of significance to a port, must demonstrate within applications that they have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • been informed by consultation at pre-application stage or earlier with the relevant port authority • have carried out a navigational risk assessment including an analysis of maritime traffic in the area and • have consulted Department of Transport, MSO and Commissioners of Irish Lights <p>Applicants must continue to engage parties identified in pre-application processes as appropriate during the decision-making process.</p>	Yes	<p>Key stakeholders were consulted and feedback from consultation is included within Section 4 of the Navigation Risk Assessment. The consultees included the Department of Transport, Marine Survey Office, Commissioners of Irish Lights and the Irish Coast Guard, and Dublin Port Company and Drogheda Port Company as local ports.</p> <p>The Navigation Risk Assessment also includes analysis of vessel traffic in the area based on multiple data sources. Therefore, the proposed development aligns with Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 4.</p>
Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 5	Proposals for capital dredging will be supported where it is necessary to safeguard national port capacity and Ireland's international connectivity, and where required compliance assessments associated with authorisations have been carried out and incorporated into subsequent competent authority decision(s).	No	Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 5 is not relevant to the proposed development as the project is not a dredging proposal.
Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 6	In areas of authorised dredging activity, including those subject to navigational dredging, proposals for	No	Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 6 is not relevant to the proposed development as the project is not situated in areas of authorised dredging activity.

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	other activities will not be supported unless they are compatible with the dredging activity.		
Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 7	<p>Proposals for maintenance dredging activity will be supported where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> relevant decisions by competent authorities incorporate the outcome of statutory environmental assessment processes, as well as necessary compliance assessments associated with authorisations, including in relation to the planning process there will be no significant adverse impact on marine activities or uses or the maritime area. Any potential adverse impact will be, in order of preference, avoided, minimised or mitigated dredged waste is managed in accordance with internationally agreed hierarchy of waste management options for sea disposal if disposing of dredged material at sea, existing registered disposal sites are used, in preference to new disposal sites and where they contribute to the policies and objectives of this NMPF 	No	Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 7 is not relevant to the proposed development as the project is not a proposal for maintenance dredging.
Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 8	<p>Proposals that cause significant adverse impacts on licensed disposal areas should not be supported.</p> <p>Proposals that cannot avoid such impact must, in order of preference"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> minimise mitigate or if it is not possible to mitigate the significant adverse impacts, proposals must set out the reasons for proceeding 	No	Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 8 is not relevant to the proposed development as the project is not situated in a licensed disposal area.
Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 9	Proposals for the management of dredged material must demonstrate that they have been assessed against the waste hierarchy (see Glossary).	Yes	<p>The sea-bed preparation required for WTG foundation installation may require localised dredging and management of drill cuttings. The management of all wastes arising from the proposed development have been assessed against the waste hierarchy as described in the Resource and Waste Chapter.</p> <p>The assessment concluded that there are not significant impacts arising from the management of dredged material within the proposed development boundary. Therefore,</p>

Policy Name	Policy Description	Relevant to Proposed Development?	Consistency of the proposed development with objectives of the NMPF
			the proposed development aligns with the objectives of Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 9.
Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 10	<p>Proposals identifying new dredge disposal sites which are subject to best practice and guidance from previous studies should be supported where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> competent authority decisions incorporate necessary compliance assessments associated with authorisations and they contribute to the policies and objectives of this NMPF. <p>Proposals must include an adequate characterisation study, be assessed against the waste hierarchy and must be informed by consultation with all relevant stakeholders</p>	No	Ports, Harbours and Shipping Policy 10 is not relevant to the proposed development as it does not identify new dredge disposal sites.
Safety at Sea			
Safety at Sea Policy 1	<p>Proposals for installation, operation, and decommissioning of Offshore Wind Farms must demonstrate how they will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimise navigational risk between commercial vessels arising from an increase in the density of vessels in maritime space as a result of wind farm layout and Allow for recreational vessels within the Offshore Wind Farm (including consideration of turbine height) or redirect recreational vessels, minimising navigational risk arising between recreational and commercial vessels. 	Yes	<p>Impacts to commercial and recreational vessels are assessed in Section 17.5 of the Shipping and Navigation Chapter, including in relation to changes in navigable sea room and WTG blade air gap, with no significant effects identified.</p> <p>Measures to minimise the navigational risk between commercial vessels arising from an increase in the density of vessels in the maritime space as a result of the wind farm are presented in the Shipping and Navigation Chapter and the Navigational Risk Assessment (Appendix 17.1) of the EIAR. For mitigation measures specifically, please refer to Section 17.6.</p> <p>Measures to minimise the navigational risk arising between recreational and commercial vessels by redirecting recreational vessels are included in the Shipping and Navigation Chapter and the Infrastructure and Other Users Chapter of the EIAR.</p> <p>With the implementation of measures included within the EIAR, it is concluded the proposed development does not pose a significant navigational risk. In conclusion, the proposed development is compliant with the objectives of the Safety at Sea Policy 1</p>
Safety at Sea Policy 2	<p>Proposals for infrastructure that have the potential to significantly reduce under-keel clearance must demonstrate how they will, in order of preference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> avoid minimise mitigate adverse impacts or 	Yes	<p>For the proposed development, inter-array and export cables will have target burial depth of 1m – 3m.</p> <p>Seabed burial will be the primary means of cable burial and the burial depth plus any external cable protection will be determined by the CBRA.</p> <p>There is a higher risk of an under-keel clearance effect with the export cables when compared to the inter-array cables. This is due both to the export cables being in shallower water and increased crossing traffic volumes.</p> <p>Baseline surveys indicated that vessel traffic in transit through the ECC was low and the majority of vessels cross the ECC perpendicularly thus minimising the overall exposure</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals should set out the reasons for proceeding 		<p>to any underwater allision risk. This will be managed through the CBRA process. See the Shipping and Navigation Chapter for further information.</p> <p>The probability of an underwater allision occurrence has been assessed to be extremely unlikely or negligible (in respect to inter-array cables) and the reduction in under-keel clearance is considered broadly acceptable, which is not significant in EIA terms.</p> <p>Therefore, the proposed development complies with Safety at Sea Policy 2.</p>
Safety at Sea Policy 3	All proposals for temporary or permanent fixed infrastructure in the maritime area must ensure navigational marking in accordance with appropriate international standards and ensure inclusion in relevant charts where applicable.	Yes	<p>As per Section 17.6 of the Shipping and Navigation Chapter, lighting and marking of the array will comply with the requirements of with the Commissioners for Irish Lights and with International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA) G1162. Further information is provided in the Lighting and Marking Plan (LMP) included in Appendix 17.1 of Volume 9.</p> <p>Therefore, the proposed development complies with the objectives of Safety at Sea Policy 3.</p>
Safety at Sea Policy 4	Establishing, changing or disestablishing Aids to Navigation (AtoN) must be sanctioned, in advance of works, by the Commissioners of Irish Lights.	Yes	<p>As per Section 17.6 of the Shipping and Navigation Chapter, lighting and marking of the array will comply with the requirements of the Commissioners for Irish Lights and with International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA) G1162. Further information is provided in the Lighting and Marking Plan (LMP) included in Appendix 17.1 of Volume 9.</p> <p>Therefore, the proposed development complies with the objectives of Safety at Sea Policy 3.</p>
Safety at Sea Policy 5	<p>Proposals must identify their potential impact, if any, on Maritime Emergency Response (Search and Rescue (SAR), Maritime Casualty and Pollution Response) operations. Where a proposal may have a significant impact on these operations it must demonstrate how it will, in order of preference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> avoid minimise mitigate adverse impacts or if it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals should set out the reasons for proceeding, supported by parties responsible for maritime SAR 	Yes	<p>Potential impacts to SAR have been assessed within Section 17.5 of the Shipping and Navigation Chapter, and have been determined to be tolerable with mitigation and ALARP, which is not significant in EIA terms. The Developer is committed to working within the parameters of MGN 654, including ID marking as well as lighting and marking in liaison with the IRCG, to minimise impacts.</p> <p>The most likely consequences in the event of a SAR operation is that SAR assets are able to fulfil their objectives without any limitations on capability. As part of the scenario deemed to have the greatest likely significant effect, it may not be possible to undertake an effective search. However, given compliance with MGN 654 for the layout, this is considered highly unlikely.</p> <p>Overall, relevant embedded mitigation measures are compliant with relevant regulator guidance, liaison with IRCG in relation to SAR resources, lighting and marking, marine coordination for proposed development vessels, proposed development vessel compliance with international marine regulations and WTG design/layout.</p> <p>Therefore, the proposed development aligns with Safety at Sea Policy 5.</p>
Sport and Recreation			

Policy Name	Policy Description	Relevant to Proposed Development?	Consistency of the proposed development with objectives of the NMPF
Sport and Recreation Policy 1	Proposals that promote sustainable development of water-based sports and marine recreation, while enhancing community health, wellbeing and quality of life, should be supported, provided that due consideration is given to environmental carrying capacities and tourism pressures.	No	Sport and Recreation Policy 1 is not relevant to the proposed development as the proposal is not designed to promote development of water-based sports and marine recreation.
Sport and Recreation Policy 2	<p>Proposals should demonstrate the following in relation to potential impact on recreation and tourism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent to which the proposal is likely to adversely impact sports clubs and other recreational users, including the extent to which proposals may interfere with facilities or other physical infrastructure The extent to which any proposal interferes with access to and along the shore, to the water, use of the resource for recreation or tourism purposes and existing navigational routes or navigational safety The extent to which the proposal is likely to adversely impact on the natural environment 	Yes	<p>The site of proposed development is in an area of relatively high marine usage. However, there are no sailing clubs, marinas, wind, kite or wave surf clubs within the study area. Recreational facilities have been assessed in the Infrastructure and Other Users Chapter. No potential likely significant effects have been identified on marine recreational users.</p> <p>The developer proposes to create and ensure implementation by the contractor of a Vessel Management Plan (VMP) which includes navigational safety measures and promulgation of information will further ensure impacts and risks are managed to an acceptable level. Additionally, advisory safety zones and details of the development may be published in Notice to Mariners (where deemed appropriate).</p> <p>Please refer to the Infrastructure and Other Users Chapter and the Socio-Economic, Tourism and Recreation Chapter for further detail.</p> <p>The design of the proposed development and further mitigations plans ensure compliance with the Sports and Recreation Policy 2.</p>
Sport and Recreation Policy 3	Opportunities to promote inclusive development of water-based sports and marine recreation should be supported, where appropriate and at the applicable scale, with a focus on facilities for people with disabilities.	No	Sport and Recreation Policy 3 is not relevant to the proposed development as the proposal is not designed to promote inclusive development of water-based sports and marine recreation.
Sport and Recreation Policy 4	Proposals that improve access to marine and coastal resources for tourism activities, and sport and recreation should be supported, where appropriate, at the applicable scale and aligned with existing development plans.	No	Sport and Recreation Policy 4 is not relevant to the proposed development as the proposal is not designed to increase access to marine and coastal resources for sports and marine recreation.
Sport and Recreation Policy 5	<p>Proposals should seek to enhance water safety through provision of appropriate International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and European Committee for Standardization (CEN) compliant safety signage.</p> <p>In general, the safety of persons should be a key consideration for planners and due consideration should be given to best practice guidance for marine</p>	Yes	<p>Advisory safety zones of up to 500m in radius around individual structures undergoing installation will be established. Advisory safety zones of 50m will be sought for incomplete structures where construction activity may be temporarily paused (and therefore the 500m safety zone has lapsed) such as installed foundations or where construction works are completed but the WTGs have not yet been commissioned in compliance with MGN 645.</p> <p>Further information on the design and implementation of water safety protocols for the proposed development is presented in the Offshore Description Chapter, the Offshore Construction Chapter, the Shipping and Navigation Chapter, the Navigational Risk</p>

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	and coastal recreation areas endorsed by the Visitor Safety in the Countryside Group.		Assessment (Appendix 17.1 of Volume 9) and the Lighting and Marking Plan (Appendix 17.4 of Volume 9). The design and implementation of safety protocols ensure the compliance of the proposed development with Sport and Recreation Policy 5.
Telecommunications			
Telecommunications Policy 1	Proposals that guarantee existing and future international telecommunications connectivity which is critically important to support the future needs of society, Government, the provision of Public Services and enterprise in Ireland, should be supported.	No	Telecommunications Policy 1 is not relevant to the proposed development as the proposal is not designed to explicitly guarantee existing and future international telecommunications connectivity due to its main objective being the transmission of power.
Telecommunications Policy 2	<p>Preference should be given to proposals where evidence is provided of an integrated approach to development and activity, such as the bundling of cables (electricity and communications) where suitable, as well as pipelines for multiple activities, to minimise impacts on the marine environment, infrastructures and other users.</p> <p>Compatibility should be achieved, in order of preference, through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoiding or • minimising or • mitigating adverse impacts, or • If it is not possible to mitigate significant adverse impacts, proposals should set out the reasons for proceeding 	Yes	<p>There are no proposed third party cables which could be bundled with the proposed development's cables.</p> <p>Known and potentially future sub-sea cable assets and onshore cable assets within the proposed development area have been identified. A total of 6 cables and pipelines that cross the study area but none come within the proposed development boundary.</p> <p>Please refer to the Offshore Construction Chapter, the Onshore Construction Strategy; the Infrastructure and Other Users Chapter and the Material Assets Chapter.</p> <p>Cable installation methodology, as well as the burial depth and any requirement for protection measures, will be defined by a detailed CBRA. The export and inter-array cables are likely to be buried. The burial depth will ensure that the cable is adequately protected against scour and damage from activities such as potential laying of other cables in the future.</p> <p>The proposed development will be compliance with the NMPF Telecommunications Policy 2</p>
Telecommunications Policy 3	<p>Preference should be given to proposals that protect submarine cables whilst achieving successful seabed user coexistence, such as the bundling of cables (electricity and communications) as well as pipelines for multiple activities where suitable. Proposals should specify if separate access to cables for the purposes of repair and maintenance is required.</p> <p>With regard to decommissioning redundant submarine cables, a risk-based approach should be applied with consideration given to cables being left in situ where this would minimise significant impacts on the</p>	Yes	<p>A total of 6 cables and pipelines transect the study area, but none are the proposed development boundary. Therefore, the proposed development aligns with Telecommunications Policy 3.</p> <p>Please refer to the Offshore Construction Chapter, the Onshore Construction Strategy, the Infrastructure and Other Users Chapter, and the Material Assets Chapter.</p>

Policy Name	Policy Description	Relevant to Proposed Development?	Consistency of the proposed development with objectives of the NMPF
	physical, natural, societal, historic, and economic value of the area.		
Telecommunications Policy 4	Proposals that ensure and enhance connectivity of Ireland's rural and island communities to high quality telecommunications networks should be supported.	No	Telecommunications Policy 4 is not relevant to the proposed development as the proposal is not related to telecommunication connectivity.
Tourism			
Tourism Policy 1	Where appropriate, proposals enabling, promoting, or facilitating sustainable tourism and recreation activities, particularly where this creates diversification or additional utilisation of related facilities beyond typical usage patterns, should be supported.	No	Tourism Policy 1 is not relevant to the proposed development as the proposal is not designed to promote or facilitate sustainable tourism and recreation activities.
Tourism Policy 2	Proposals must identify possible impacts on tourism. Where a potential significant impact upon tourism is identified it should be demonstrated how the potential negative consequences to tourism in communities will be minimised. This must include assessment of how the benefits of proposals are not outweighed by potential negative impacts.	Yes	The effects of the proposed development on tourism resulting from the construction, operation and decommissioning of the proposed development have been assessed in the Socio-Economic, Tourism and Recreation Chapter. The assessment concluded that there were no significant pre-mitigation effects on tourism arising from the proposed development. Therefore, the proposed development aligns with Tourism Policy 2.
Tourism Policy 3	Proposals for tourism development should seek to optimise facilities and use of space by taking a cross-sectoral development approach that provides for multiple activities, whilst minimising the extent to which the proposal is likely to adversely impact on the natural environment.	No	Tourism Policy 3 is not relevant to the proposed development as the proposal is not designed to develop tourism.
Wastewater Treatment and Disposal			
Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Policy 1	Proposals by Irish Water related to the treatment and disposal of wastewater that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • service the social and economic development of the country under the National Planning Framework • resolve environmental issues at priority areas identified by the EPA • contribute to the realisation of the objectives of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ireland's River Basin Management Plan 2018 – 2021 b. The Water Services Policy Statement 2018 – 2025 	No	Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Policy 1 is not relevant to the proposed development as the proposal is not from Irish Water.

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	c. Marine Strategy Framework Directive 2012 - 2020 should be supported, provided they fully meet the environmental safeguards contained within relevant authorisation processes.		
Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Policy 2	<p>Proposals that have the potential to significantly adversely affect existing and planned wastewater management and treatment infrastructure where a consent or authorisation or lease has been granted or formally applied for by Irish Water should not be authorised unless:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compatibility with the existing, authorised, proposed or otherwise identified in consultations with Irish Water activity, can be satisfactorily demonstrated; • the proposal is clearly of strategic or national importance. <p>Where possible, proposals that may affect Irish Water activities or plans should engage with Irish Water at the earliest available opportunity.</p> <p>Compatibility should be achieved, in order of preference, through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoiding adverse impacts on those activities; and / or • minimising impacts where they cannot be avoided; and / or • mitigating impacts where they cannot be minimised. 	No	Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Policy 1 is not relevant to the proposed development as the proposal has no impact on wastewater management or treatment.

2. Conclusion

This report provides an assessment of the consistency of the proposed development with the policies and objectives of the NMPF.

The assessment concluded that through all phases, with the implementation of the mitigation measures proposed, the proposed development will further the objectives and policies of the NMPF with respect to Offshore Renewable Energy and will not adversely affect the attainment of the objectives and policies for the other key sectors.

In relation to the overarching biodiversity policies of the NMPF, avoidance, minimisation or embedded mitigation has been incorporated in the design of the proposed development, and further mitigation measures will be implemented as required, to reduce adverse effects on biodiversity receptors. With one exception, such effects are not expected to be significant. The one exception is a conclusion in respect of offshore bats that, under the precautionary principle, during the operational phase a likely significant effect cannot be ruled out for foraging bats from the potential bat population at Rockabill, as further monitoring is required to determine if a roost exists on the island. The underlying assessment to this conclusion is comprehensively outlined in Volume 5, Chapter 35: Offshore Bats.

In addition, in relation to SLVIA, the EIAR concluded that the project will not have any significant negative impact by itself but when considered cumulatively with the southernly viewpoints (VP 36-47), a significant cumulative negative impact could not be ruled out.

No other significant impacts were identified in the carrying out of the EIAR in respect of the proposed development, either alone or when considered cumulatively with other projects.

Other than the potential impact in relation to offshore bats highlighted above, the proposed development, which is of critical importance to the delivering of Ireland's climate goals, will not adversely affect the attainment of the overarching policies of the NMPF.